

House committees and 79 House hearings on health care reform in just over 2 years.

If you have Medicare or employer-based insurance, you shouldn't be affected. You will have real choice. You will have the freedom to choose your insurance. If you don't have employer-based insurance, then we need you to have an option, and today you don't have that option.

ACHIEVING MEANINGFUL HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Mr. WITTMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, as I traveled throughout my district this past weekend, from Middlesex to Caroline to Fredericksburg, the one thing I heard from folks is they are deeply concerned about the health care reform package that we have before us.

They said, ROB, we see that there is a problem and we need to do something, but we need to do the right thing. We need to take the time to make sure that we craft solutions that control costs, that maintain the relationship between patients and their doctors, to make sure that we keep what is good and what works about this system and we work on those things that are broken.

I hear many ideas from both sides of the aisle that I think accomplish that, and I think it is high time for the majority to make sure that they incorporate ideas from the minority which I believe we have in common to make sure we come up with reasonable, practical, workable solutions for the American people to make sure that we have that access to quality health care reform here in the United States that I know we can achieve.

MAKING TOUGH DECISIONS ON HEALTH CARE

(Mrs. CAPPS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, CBO projects that the public plan option would likely attract around 10 million patients. That certainly puts to rest the assertion that private insurance would go out of business.

Not surprisingly, the estimates that opponents of the public plan are citing to prove their mistaken point were arrived at by the Lewin Group. Guess who owns the Lewin Group? An insurance company.

I urge my colleagues to stop repeating the false message of the health insurance industry. The insurance industry opposes a public option because they know it would force them to be honest, to keep their premiums down for patients.

I urge my colleagues to pay attention to the facts, not the rhetoric, and I urge you to join me in reiterating our

strong commitment to true health reform. Let's pass a bill with a strong public option before we adjourn.

We were elected to make tough decisions and take important votes. We must fulfill this obligation.

ASKING FOR JOBS TODAY

(Mr. LATTA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, America and Ohio are hurting. Ohio has an unemployment rate of 11.1 percent. My district, the Fifth District, is the number one manufacturing and number one agricultural district in the State of Ohio.

One of my counties, Williams, has an unemployment rate of 11.6 percent. I was up there this past weekend and the people were all asking me the same question: Where are the jobs? Where are the jobs? They want jobs today.

The President said this past year that with the stimulus bill, America wouldn't have an unemployment rate of 8 percent. Now it is 9.5 percent. Ohio is 11.1 percent. Since January, America has lost over 3 million jobs. Three million jobs.

This last month, the Democrats passed the cap-and-tax bill. It is estimated it is going to cost millions of American jobs. Millions. Now the Democrat House bill that is before us on health care could cost over 5 million jobs. Five million jobs.

My folks are scared, and they want to know where the jobs are.

Mr. Speaker, we ask for jobs today.

PROVIDING HEALTH CARE THAT AMERICANS NEED AND DESERVE

(Mrs. CHRISTENSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, we Democrats have been explaining the health care bill, but our colleagues on the other side of the aisle seem not to have heard. The truth about our bill is that it does not create a government-run health care system. Instead, there is one public plan. Individuals and families can keep the plan they have, or they are free to choose—free to choose—the public plan or one of the private plans in the exchange.

As a doctor, I support the bill, and I want it passed out of Energy and Commerce this week because it gives family doctors like me the support we need to spend time listening to our patients and managing their care. It actually removes the barriers between doctors and their patients.

For those in this country who have never had full access to quality and comprehensive care, we welcome the bill, even though we know it will cost a lot to begin to close the health care gaps that our dysfunctional system has created. We cannot afford not to do it. Lives are at stake. There are enough

savings in this bill from prevention to help pay for it.

To everyone who is holding this bill hostage, please get out of the way and let us pass H.R. 3200 so that everyone in this country can have the health care they deserve and they need.

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CALLING ON DEMOCRATS TO WORK ON A BIPARTISAN HEALTH CARE ALTERNATIVE

(Mr. LANCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, for the second time this month, nonpartisan congressional budget analysts have told Congress the Democratic health plan would increase, not decrease, our Nation's burgeoning long-term health costs. On Saturday the Congressional Budget Office said the proposal to give an independent panel the power to keep Medicare spending in check would, in reality, save almost no money. The bill's proponents had touted the panel as critical to pay for the massive \$1.5 trillion health care legislation. CBO's recent analysis comes on the heels of an earlier budget report, showing that the Democratic health care proposal would add to our already tremendously growing debt of \$11 trillion and rising.

I once again call upon the Democratic leadership to put aside its proposal and work with the centrist Republican Tuesday Group on an affordable and effective alternative that we have proposed in good faith.

ONE OF THE GREATEST BENEFITS FOR SMALL BUSINESS IS HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Mr. YARMUTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, one of the myths that's being perpetrated by those who are trying to stop health care reform is that this is going to be somehow dangerous to small businesses. Well, small businesses know what it is to feel the pain of the dysfunctional health care system. They know that 60 percent of their owners and workers and their families are uninsured. They know that their premiums have gone up 129 percent in just the last 9 years. They know that they pay 18 percent more in premiums and their deductibles are twice as much as somebody working for a large firm.

Our reform measure creates competition so that small businesses have the same bargaining power, the same opportunities as the largest companies in this country to provide health care for their families and their owners.

We also know that we're providing a tax credit to help those small businesses do what they want to do, which is to provide their employees with health care.

So forget the myths. Rely on the facts. This is one of the greatest benefits for small business that we could